



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
BUREAU OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY
7700 ARLINGTON BOULEVARD
FALLS CHURCH, VA 22042

IN REPLY REFER TO
5720/F19-016
Ser M00JE/18UM00J0197
November 16, 2018

Mr. Emmanuel Freudenthal
MuckRock News
DEPT MR 44937
411A Highland Ave
Sommerville, MA 02144-2516

Dear Mr. Freudenthal,

SUBJECT: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT (FOIA) REQUEST – BUMED F19-006

I am responding to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request of October 12, 2018 to the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery (BUMED). In your request, you sought a variety of documents related to “Ebola”. I assigned your request BUMED F19-006 (DON –NAVY-2019-000850) for identification purposes.

After coordination with the Subject Matter Expert (SME) the following information is provided:

1 - Any photos taken during the mission to transport Ebola blood samples from Liberia to the US towards the end of 2016. This includes photos by employees as part of their work on this official mission, or photos by third party contractors.

BUMED did not export any samples (human clinical samples or viral agent) during the Ebola response. Additionally, we are unaware of the Navy transporting samples from Liberia to the US in 2016.

2 - Any contracts or agreements with Phoenix Air to supply their services for the mission to transport Ebola blood samples from Liberia to the US towards the end of 2016 (signed by any institution such as CDC, DTRA, NIH, etc). I'm sure you'll have a copy of that.

We are unaware of agreements signed between other USG entities and Phoenix Air which is a DoS contracted service; however, neither the Naval Medical Research Command nor BUMED had any agreement with Phoenix Air to transport samples.

3 - Any contracts or agreements with Sandia that you have at hand from 01 July 2013 and today regarding their work in Liberia (signed by any institution such as CDC, DTRA, NIH, etc). I'm sure you'll have a copy of that.

We have no knowledge of any agreements between Navy and Sandia to do any work in Liberia.

4 - Any Chain of Custody documents signed for the shipping of any Ebola blood samples from Liberia to the USA between 01/01/16 and 31 December 17. The staff responsible for the sample management at the CDC and NIH will have a copy of that.

BUMED does not have any responsive documents as we did not have a role in the chain of custody.

5 - Any documents with information linked to blood samples that were transported from Liberia to the US from 01/01/17 to 01/11/17 (e.g. the name of the patient, their origin, their gender, their clinical signs etc). I do not require individual documents as I understand that the private information of patients cannot be disclosed. Please feel free to redact that personal information from any documents that contain lists. In case there are many documents that pertain to single individuals with the sample templates, then please provide one of each of the types of documents as a template.

BUMED does not possess records of any samples that might have been transferred from Liberia to the US.

6 - The agreement between Liberia and the US (signed by the Ambassador of the US in Liberia) signed around September 2016 for the transport of Ebola blood samples from Liberia to the US.

BUMED does not possess records of agreements between Liberia and the US signed by the Ambassador of the US in Liberia.

7 - Any inventory of Ebola blood samples held by the US that were brought from Liberia, including samples held at Fort Detrick and Rocky Mountain Lab.

BUMED is not in possession of any Ebola blood samples.

In light of the above, you are advised of your right to appeal this determination in writing. Such an appeal, if any, should be addressed to:

Office of the Judge Advocate General (Code 14)
Washington Navy Yard
1322 Patterson Avenue
Washington DC 20374-5066

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The appeal must be received within 90 calendar days from the date of my letter and a copy of this correspondence should be attached, along with a statement regarding the basis of your appeal. It is recommended that the letter of appeal and the envelope both bear the notation, "Freedom of Information Act Appeal."

For this determination, you have the right to seek dispute resolution services from the DoD Navy Component FOIA Public Liaison, Mr. Chris Julka, at Christopher.a.julka@navy.mil or (703) 697-0031.

There are no assessable fees associated with the processing of your request. If you have questions, my point of contact is Ms. Della W. Garcia, who may be contacted at della.w.garcia.civ@mail.mil or (703) 681-8970.

Sincerely,



CAMERON R. NELSON
Commander
Judge Advocate General's Corps
United States Navy
Staff Judge Advocate
By direction of the Chief,
Bureau of Medicine and Surgery

